

Orrie Cowie – Leading Merino Genetic Supplier

The Orrie Cowie stud's reputation as one of the nation's leading Merino genetic suppliers was reinforced last Wednesday with an outstanding presentation of big, plain bodied and heavy cutting rams that produced an equally impressive sale result.

From their main auction of 81 Merino and Poll Merino rams, their 92 graded rams from the same flocks, and their 34 Redwood White Suffolks, 195 of 207 rams sold for an impressive \$1170 average.

The highlight was their main Merino and Poll Merino auction where 74 of the 81 Merinos and Poll Merinos sold to \$12,000 and averaged \$2253; with rams going to three states.

21 of these 74 sold to ram breeding flocks for an average of \$4224, highlighting how important the Orrie Cowie flock is as a seedstock genetic resource.

However, it also puts a better balanced perspective on the flock ram sales in relation to other sales around the state. The 53 auction rams that went to commercial Merino breeders averaged \$1472, a considerably more affordable and good value figure for most commercial sheep producers in today's sheep industry.

The sale highlight was the Poll Merino Orrie Cowie 097603, a big, super impressive and well-structured son of OC Prince with well crimped and nourished 21 micron, 2.85 SD, 13.21 CV and 99.8 CF wool. After an opening \$10,000 bid, Steve Koehler, Radnor stud Murray Bridge did not have to wait long before Elders auctioneer Tom Penna knocked him down to Steve for \$12,000. Radnor first bought in 1987 and has added about 20 Orrie Cowie rams since then. It was this ram's size, carriage, carcase and outstanding long stapled well defined wool that attracted Steve to invest in these genetics.

Orrie Cowie 102776, a one year old autumn shorn son of Prince followed and Orrie Cowie regulars DY & PM Reade, Curramulka gave the winning \$8500 bid. They later added two more Poll Merinos at \$4500 and \$4200 to put together a very impressive group of rams for their flock.

Western Australian breeders have always been strong supporters of Orrie Cowie genetics and again featured in the buyers this year. Robert and Braden Lange, Melrose, Narrogin, WA won the bidding at \$5000 for OC 097537, another massive Poll Merino with impressive 20.5 micron wool. Stan and Dorothy Kupsch, Geraldton and also Orrie Cowie regulars sent a buying order through the sale agents. They picked up two impressive medium woolled Polls at \$2800 and \$3000. Six of the flock rams also went to Western Australian clients.

Bruce McCarthy, Clare and buying through Elders Clare's Peter Rolestone has been a regular top end ram buyer at Orrie Cowie for many years and this year entered the volume buying stakes. He picked up seven rams in total; four Polls to \$4400 and three horned rams to \$4000 and averaged \$3300.

Chris Murdoch, Warooka was pushed to \$6200 for a very impressive and complete one year old autumn shorn Poll Merino. Grant and Carolyn Johnson, Carcuma North stud, Peake have just had a good sale and invested some of their income in two new Poll Merino sires at \$3400 and \$2000.

Michael Voigt, Melrose is another Orrie Cowie regular and was back again and bidding strongly. He purchased three top horned rams including the 156 kg OC 095023 for \$4800.

Two Yorke Peninsula regulars were again very strong bidders this year, each purchasing five rams. Gerald Anderson, Rock Glen Pastoral Trust, Stansbury successfully bid from \$1000 to \$2000, while the McSkimming family, Minlaton paid from \$800 to \$3600.

Kangaroo Island producers have been strong Orrie Cowie buyers for a long time and again made a significant impact this year with four active buyers. Collectively, they paid to \$5200 in purchasing 30 rams. David and Nell Hall paid the \$5200 for a huge, plain bodied, medium woolled Poll Merino, while Pat Florance buying through Landmark's Paul Jardine went to \$2200 to secure four rams. Calana Heights and RA & YG Hams were volume buyers, operating in both the auction and the graded private selection pens.

Other key Merino buyers were JF, JE, PJ & RA Rodgers, Milang (three to \$2400), TD Smith & Co, Yorketown (three to \$2100), LT & VS Honner, Elliston (three to \$1600) and EL & LA Short, Curramulka (three to \$1800).

The Dalla family's Redwood White Suffolk offering followed and saw all 34 rams clear to \$1400 and average \$1005.

Buying was dominated by five local area producers. VL Clift Farming, Curramulka purchased six rams to \$1000 to be the biggest volume buyer. Phil Gregor, Curramulka paid the equal top of \$1400 in purchasing three rams; TD, PK & ED Barlow, Yorketown also paid to \$1400 for four rams, while Rock Glen Pastoral Trust and DY & PM Reade, Curramulka each added four rams to \$1250.

Summary	Merinos/Poll Merinos		White Suffolks	
	2011	2010	2011	2010
Offered	81	57	34	30
Sold	74	53	34	28
Top	\$12000	\$7200	\$1400	\$1300
Average	\$2253	\$1791	\$1005	\$895

Agents: Elders Minlaton

Auctioneer: Tom Penna



Orrie Cowie's Heather & Dennis Dalla sold this impressive Poll Merino for \$12,000 to Stephen (holding ram) & Ben Koehler, Radnor stud, Murray Bridge at their 46th annual on-property sale last Wednesday. Also pictured is Elders' auctioneer Tom Penna (right).



Gavin & David Reade, Curramulka purchased three top Poll Merinos at the Orrie Cowie sale. They are pictured with the sale's second top priced ram at \$8500 held by Orrie Cowie principal Dennis Dalla.



Robert (left) and Braden Lange (right) Narrogin, WA went to \$5000 before securing OC 097537 at the Orrie Cowie sale. They are with Orrie Cowie principals Heather & Dennis Dalla (centre).



Kangaroo Island buyers were very strong at Orrie Cowie, headed by David & Nell Hall, who went to \$5200 before securing this impressive Orrie Cowie Poll Merino.



Phil Gregor and David Reade purchased seven of the Redwood White Suffolk rams between them at the Dalla family's annual auction at Warooka. They are with Elders' Minlaton manager, Adam Pitt.